



Denville Township Schools Mentoring Plan

Mentor Plan for Quality Induction of Novice and New Teachers 2023-2024

“...The task for an induction program and for mentors in such a program is not to make teaching easy; that is probably impossible, given the realities of classroom life. Teaching is not an easy job, period. But it is rewarding or at least it can be. The challenge, then, is for a mentor teacher to help a novice experience sufficient rewards in daily life to master the complex details needed to become truly accomplished.”

Charlotte Danielson

Mentor Plan for Quality Induction of Novice and New Teachers

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Plan Approval and the Local Board of Education

District Profile Sheet

The district profile sheet reflects the mentoring data from the 2023-2024 school year.

Name of District: Denville

District Code: 1090 County Code: 27

District Address: 1 St. Mary's Place, Denville, NJ 07834

Chief School Administrator: Steven Forte

Mentoring Program Contact: Dr. Sandra Cullis, Assistant Superintendent
Laurie Smith, Mentor Coordinator

Type of District: PreK-8

The numbers below reflect September 1, 2023 start dates:

Number of new Teachers 16

Number of novice teachers with a Certificate of Eligibility: 2

Number of novice teachers with a Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced

Standing: 6

Number of Year 2 Provisional Teachers 4

Number of Mentors needed: 8

K-5 : 14

6-8: 2

Special Education Teachers: 3

Other Certificated Staff: 3

NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR A MENTORING PROGRAM

Rationale:

While education programs and most colleges and universities provide practicing teachers with experiences that are designed to help them acclimate to the real classroom environment, it is incumbent upon districts to provide additional supports to novice educators.

The objective of establishing a Mentor Plan for Quality Induction of Novice and New Teachers is to build a foundation for the success of novice and new teachers in their assignments, which will ultimately be demonstrated by the academic achievement of their students. Further, it is equally important to provide mentoring and professional development that will foster growth and assist novice and new teachers in their transition into effective teachers and colleagues.

Procedure:

1. Upon approval of hire and prior to the beginning of the contracted teaching assignment, Human Resources will identify candidates with CEAS, CE, and standard certificates. This list will be provided to the assistant superintendent, principals, and mentor coordinator.
2. Mentor identification and approval process:
 - Candidates will complete the application
 - Summative rating of highly effective or effective from prior year
 - Application and recommendation forms are submitted to the Deputy Superintendent, Mentor Administrator, and SciP.
 - Once approved, mentors will be placed on the BOE agenda by the building principals, prior to the beginning of the novice teacher's contracted

teaching assignment.

3. A new hire must participate in a new teacher orientation and induction program that includes:
 - Training on Charlotte Danielson’s Evaluation Rubric and Practice Instrument
 - Mandated Professional Development topics
 - District policies and procedures
 - Introduction to curriculum and assessment for their particular assignment.
 - Support Services and Intervention procedures (TSS)
4. All mentor teachers will participate in professional development that includes:
 - Danielson Evaluation Rubric and Practice Instrument
 - NJ Professional Standards for teachers
 - New Jersey Student Learning Standards
 - Classroom observation skills
 - Facilitating adult learning
 - Leading reflective conversations about teaching practice

All novice teachers will also receive intense mentoring during the first two weeks of school.

While completing the initial intensive induction process (13), novice teachers and mentors will meet for a minimum of 120 minutes per week. Both mentor and novice teacher are expected to sign the mentor log after each entry. Mentor Logs are due to the novice teacher’s school SCIP no later than the (3rd) third working day of each month.

Beginning the second month of mentoring, both novice teacher and teacher mentor should visit the mentor’s classroom for peer observations at least twice per month. The mentor coordinator and novice building administrator should be notified of the visitation schedule in advance. The teacher mentors will receive professional development in peer observations prior to conducting the first visits. While the notes should be kept confidential, the recommendations should be logged.

All visits and support do not have to be physical meetings. Electronic means may

be utilized including video conferencing, emails, and journals. Text messaging may be used to expedite feedback, but it is not an acceptable log entry.

Novice teachers with a Certificate of Eligibility will have \$27.50 deducted from each pay period until the \$550 mentor fee has been met or the mentor relationship ends. If the novice teacher successfully completes the induction program and is rehired for the next school, the Denville Board of Education will reimburse the \$550 fee to the novice teacher. Mentors shall receive payment of \$27.50 each pay period until the \$550 fee has been paid or the mentor relationship ends.

The mentor coordinator will provide training for mentors in the areas of **classroom observations, the district evaluation system, reflective teaching practices, and learning styles of adult learners**. The mentor coordinator will also maintain a matrix of mentors and provisional teachers, attendance at required trainings, provide PD hours within my learning plan, and monitor concerns reported regarding mentoring.

VISION

The Denville Township School District knows that what matters most for students' learning are the knowledge, skills, and commitment of our teachers. It is our belief that we must uncompromisingly build the learning capacity of our novice teachers thereby enhancing the profession of teaching, which will manifest in the achievement of optimal student growth and development.

The purpose of the Denville Township Schools Quality Induction of Novice and New Teachers program is to facilitate growth of novice and new teachers. It is our goal to assist the beginning and new teachers to reach the highest levels of professional and personal development during their initial years of teaching and or in Denville Schools.

We further strive to identify and meet their needs through a collaborative effort of the novice teacher, the teacher mentor, the mentor contact and supporting administrators.

GOALS

The Denville Township School District has developed Denville Township Schools Quality Induction of Novice and New Teachers program to meet the statutory requirements for Provisional Teachers, Administrative Code (6:11-4.3, 6:11-13, 6:11-13(d)). The purpose of this program is to provide new teachers the opportunity for ongoing support, collegial conversations, supervision, and evaluation by a professional support team. The support team consists of a teacher mentor, mentor coordinator, SciP team, school leaders, and district administrators.

The goals of the Denville Township Schools Quality Induction of Novice and New Teachers program are:

- To assign a highly qualified mentor teacher.
- To provide the assistance necessary to reduce the problems known to be common to beginning and new teachers.
- To support development of the knowledge and the skills needed by novice teachers to be successful in their initial teaching positions.
- To integrate novice and new teachers into the culture of the school, the district and the community.
- To provide an opportunity for novice and new teachers to analyze and reflect on their teaching with assistance from support teachers and instructional coaches.
- To initiate and build a foundation with novice and new teachers for the continued study of teaching.

The objectives of the induction process are designed to assure the realization of our program goal- helping the novice or new teacher make the transition from theory to practice- assisting with the adaptation to the demands of the new environment and to function effectively in the system. We also seek to achieve the following through the Denville Township Schools Quality Induction of Novice and New Teachers program

- To provide information regarding available resources both human and material, policies and procedures of the district.
- To provide information regarding available resources both human and material, policies and procedures unique to the building assignment.
- To develop further an understanding of effective classroom

techniques and procedures- classroom management and delivery skills and the teaching strategies reconciled with those learned in college or other academic setting.

- To develop an understanding of curriculum program expectations- familiarization with subject content, skills, and concepts to be taught, time elements to be devoted to subjects, and alternative activities to facilitate learning.
- To develop an understanding of the systems of evaluation reporting to children, reporting to parents, standard classroom means of evaluating process, and standardized testing programs.
- To develop an understanding of the systems used to monitor instruction - type of supervision and the means to evaluate teachers – district and state observation and evaluation forms.
- To develop an awareness of alternative programs, their purpose and objectives, their availability, and the process of referrals- children needing extra support.

QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE MENTORS

The criteria for selection of effective mentors may be organized into four general categories: character, professional competence and experience, communication skills, and interpersonal skills. Together with a willingness to serve and a vote of confidence by colleagues, these characteristics comprise guidelines for selecting mentors.

All mentors are required to attend all training meetings.

Character

- Willing to be a role model for other teachers
- Exhibits strong commitment to the teaching profession Believes mentoring improves instructional practice Willing to advocate on behalf of colleagues

- Willing to receive training to improve mentoring skills Demonstrates a commitment to lifelong learning
- Is reflective and able to learn from mistakes Exhibits good humor and resourcefulness Enjoys new challenges and solving problems

Professional Competence and Experience

- Is regarded by colleagues as an outstanding teacher.
- Has an effective or highly effective summative rating from the prior.
- Has excellent knowledge of pedagogy and subject. Has confidence in his/her own instructional skills.
- Feels comfortable being observed by other teachers. Maintains a network of professional contacts.
- Understands the policies and procedures of the school, district, and teachers' association Is a meticulous observer of classroom practice.
- Collaborates well with other teachers and administrators. Is willing to learn new teaching strategies from the novice.

Communication Skills

- Is able to articulate effective instructional strategies. Listens attentively
- Asks questions that prompt reflection and understanding, offers critiques in positive and productive ways
- Is efficient with the use of time Uses Email effectively
- Is discreet and maintains confidentiality

Interpersonal Skills

- Is able to maintain a trusting professional relationship
- Knows how to express care for a protégé's emotional and professional needs Is attentive to sensitive political issues
- Works well with individuals from different cultures
- Is approachable; easily establishes rapport with others; Is patient

Source: National Foundation for the Improvement of Education

Selection of Mentors

Each mentor teacher should be a fully certified teacher with at least two (2) years effective teaching experience with the Denville Township School District. This guideline may only be amended by the Chief School Administrator or designee.

Wherever possible, the Teacher mentor should be certified in the same field as the Novice Teacher. Additionally, where possible, the Teacher mentor should be teaching the same grade level or, when not possible, should be within one grade level of the novice teacher. Ideally, the teacher mentor should be located within the same building. If the above criteria cannot be met within the same building, the teacher mentor may be selected from another building and an instructional buddy should be assigned within the building. Instructional coaches will be used as teacher mentors only in anomalous circumstances.

Mentor identification and approval process:

- Candidates will complete the application
- Summative rating of highly effective or effective from prior year
- Application forms are submitted to the Assistant Superintendent
- Once approved, mentors will be placed on the BOE agenda by the building principals, prior to the beginning of the novice teacher's contracted teaching assignment.

The teacher mentor must also agree to maintain the confidential nature of the mentor teacher/novice teacher relationship.

The teacher mentor has demonstrated exemplary command of content area knowledge and of pedagogy.

The teacher is knowledgeable about the resources and opportunities in the district and able to act as a referral source to the novice or new teacher.

The teacher mentor has completed the mentor training program

The HIRING ADMINISTRATOR (Principal/Supervisor/Director) will be responsible for submitting the name of the mentor prior to the beginning of the contracted teaching assignment for all teachers who DO NOT HOLD A STANDARD TEACHING CERTIFICATE.

Human Resources is responsible for ensuring the HIRING ADMINISTRATOR submits a mentor recommendation

- The building principals will assign the mentor to the novice at the point of hire by the Board of Education.

STAKEHOLDER COMMITMENT

The Denville Township School District has several stakeholders who participate in the district's Induction of Novice and New Teachers program. The commitment from all stakeholders ensures that mentors receive the training they need to provide support and guidance to the novice and new teachers.

The Board of Education Will Support Novice and New Teacher Induction by:

- Providing funding for the district induction program
- Supporting the district induction program
- Reviewing and approving the district's induction program

District and School leaders and SciPs will Support Novice and New Teacher Induction by:

- Informing novice and new teachers about the Induction program and the New Jersey Provisional Teacher Program
- Selecting mentors based upon application criteria
- Matching mentors and novice teachers considering years of experience, teaching assignment, proximity, and personality
- Respecting the confidentiality of the mentor-novice relationship
- Contributing to the ongoing program evaluation, including ensuring mentors' training attendance and submission of mentor logs
- Supporting and encourages qualified teachers to apply to become mentors
- Supporting the mentor-novice teacher relationship by scheduling time to plan together, observe each other, and conference

- Becoming knowledgeable through training about the components of the mentoring and induction program
- Coordinating and participates in orientation and other workshop sessions for novice teachers
- Creating and supports a professional learning community that enhances the mentor-novice teacher relationship
- Attend PD regarding how to support novice teachers

The Mentor Will Support Novice Teacher Induction by:

- Attend all scheduled mentor trainings
- Devote time before school, after school, or during free time within the school day to meet with the novice teacher.
- Hold a minimum of two informal meetings each week to discuss the new teacher's questions, needs, and experiences.
- Observe and be observed by the novice teacher within either the teacher's classroom and/or a third teacher's classroom in order to model effective teaching techniques (this may include demonstration lessons).
- Visit the novice teacher's classroom for the purpose of non-evaluative observation and the provision of feedback, coaching, and support.
- Be accessible for informal support, consultation, and orientation of the novice teacher about district and school policies, procedures, and expectations.
- Keep a log of times and dates of all contacts with the novice teacher using the district form. The mentor and novice teacher must sign each entry. The completed signed log must be submitted to the Novice Teacher's School SCIP committee no later than the 3rd working day of each month. The final log must be submitted to Human Resources before payment of the mentor fee will be authorized.

The Novice Teacher Agrees To:

- Attend all scheduled mentor/novice sessions and district-led novice teacher trainings
- Maintain ongoing lesson plans following district format and documenting the NJSLS
- Invite mentors into the classroom for peer observations
- Obtain ongoing support and reflect on classroom practices aligned with the New Jersey Standards for Teachers

- Maintain confidentiality for all mentor-novice activities and discussions
- Contribute to ongoing program evaluation
- Develop a Professional Development Plan within 30 days of hire
- Ask questions, listen, participate in discussions, and read professional journals and articles
- Receive constructive feedback from the mentor, school leaders, and other content experts
- Keep a reflective journal throughout the process
- Seek help!

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMPONENTS FOR MENTORS

Mentor teachers must complete a comprehensive Mentor Teacher Training Program provided by the district. Additional and ongoing sessions that provide opportunities for reflection and discussion of the mentoring process occur during the school year. During these sessions, the focus assists the mentors with providing specific and concrete feedback. In addition, mentors receive in-depth training in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

The mentor teacher is responsible for promoting the novice teacher's knowledge and instructional strategies related to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and Professional Standards for Teachers in order to facilitate student achievement. All mentors will receive a copy of Charlotte Danielson's detailed 2022 rubric to facilitate the peer-observation process and critical dialogue.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMPONENTS FOR NOVICE TEACHERS

Over the years, several theories of adult learning have been identified. It is important for the Denville Township School District to utilize effective adult learning techniques to design a rigorous and comprehensive Novice and New Teacher Induction Program. Based upon the research on adult learning, adults learn most effectively when there is: a perceived need for new knowledge and skills; an opportunity to apply what has been learned; an emphasis on integrating new knowledge with what is already known; and an opportunity for collaboration and reflection. (Knowles, 1980; Menriam & Caffarella, 1991; Watkins & Marsick, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1996).

Therefore, the novice teachers' professional learning-experiences must be:

- Systemic
- Collaborative
- Reflective
- Rich with discussion, debate, problem posing and problem solving
- A real world balance of theory and practice

Conversations, dialogue, reflective writing, and collaborative problem solving must become common practices that encourage each novice teacher to challenge assumptions, gain new insights, and build leadership capacity. Each member of the teaching community must feel a sense of accountability for student learning and be willing to not only take individual responsibility for identified problems but also take on the collective responsibility for solving them.

The Denville Township School District recognizes the need for professional development which targets novice and new teachers and seeks to provide them with ongoing support. Therefore, the district is committed to providing a one year induction process for novice teachers.

District Mentoring Plan: The District Plan Development and Approval Process

Place an "X" in the box that is appropriate for each item

District-wide Planning Process	Y E S	N O	T B I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has our district engaged a broad-based group of teachers and school leaders, including representation from teacher association, as members of the School Improvement Panel SciP or District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC) to develop a mentoring plan aligned with state regulations? 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the SciPs monitor implementation of the mentoring program and use feedback to adjust and make improvements? 	X		
Criteria-based Selection and Matching of Mentors			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does our district mentoring plan include at least the criteria for mentor selection in state regulations? 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are mentors selected based on the criteria stated in the regulations? 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does our district have criteria for matching mentors and novice teachers? 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the matches between mentors and novice teachers based on criteria stated in the mentoring 	X		
Mentors Services			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do mentors receive training in the skills of conferencing and feedback? 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do mentors receive training in the skills of providing support in areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment? 	X		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a specified expectation regarding the frequency of interactions (conferences, observations) between the mentor and the novice teacher? <p>Novice Teacher Services</p>	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the novice teachers in the district participate in professional development activities (on topics such as classroom management, parent communication, diversity, lesson planning) that are specifically tailored to meet the needs of novice teachers? • Are novice teachers brought together regularly during the year for networking opportunities? 	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are novice teachers given time and support to observe their mentors and other colleagues and to be observed by their mentors and other teachers? 	x		

Place an "X" in the box that is appropriate for each item.

School Leader Services	YES	NO	TBI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do school leaders model a range of ways to support novice teachers at their schools? 	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do school leaders use a wide range of approaches to engage all staff in supporting novice teachers? 	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do school leaders use supervision and evaluation as a growth-oriented experience for novice teachers aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers? 	x		
District Board of Education and Community			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do all district staff and parents know that there is a rigorous mentoring for quality induction program in the schools to support novice and veteran teachers for professional growth aligned with New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers? 	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the community invited to support district efforts to nurture novice teachers? <p>On-going Program Evaluation</p>	x		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the SCIP/DEAC engage in ongoing assessment (process/formative evaluation) of the mentoring for quality induction program? Does the SCIP/DEAC gather outcome/summative information on the impact of their mentoring for quality induction program and is this information shared with staff and community? 	x		

ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

In accordance with the mentoring regulations specified in the NJAC 6A:9-8, novice teachers will be assigned a mentor after they have been board approved for a teaching position with the Denville Township School District. A new teacher orientation and induction will be held in the summer prior to the school year. Comprehensive training meetings will be held bi-monthly after school. These meetings will include but are not limited to training on the evaluation system, lesson planning, effective communication and listening skills, and reflection.

Mentor and novice teacher teams will meet weekly. These interactive and collaborative experiences may focus on such topics as: classroom management, using data to inform instruction, establishing high expectations for students, and learning styles.

Before Mentoring Begins (August)

- Mentors receive training in communication, teacher observation and conferencing, and effective skills.

- Novice teachers attend an orientation session covering program expectations, participant responsibilities, and program activities.

- Mentors and novice teachers meet in the novice teachers' classrooms to talk about practical considerations for the opening of school, such as: room arrangement, classroom rules, school procedures, obtaining supplies, and lesson plans for the first week.

During the First Few Months of School (September-December)

- Mentors and novice teachers meet frequently both formally and informally to discuss issues of instruction and classroom management.
- Mentors provide emotional support to novice teachers.
- Mentors meet/observe novice teachers once a week and give feedback.

During the Remaining Months of the School Year (January – April)

- Mentors and novice teachers meet less often
- Novice teachers observe in mentors' classrooms.
- Mentors and novice teachers establish a dialogue on effective teaching.

At the End of the School Year (May-June)

- Mentors and novice teachers evaluate the program
- Novice teacher reflects on personal and professional growth and development.

FUNDING RESOURCES

The Denville Township Board of Education has made a financial commitment in order to support the novice and new teachers and **will pursue reimbursement from the NJDOE as stated in 6A:9-8.4.h**. This funding includes the following:

- Money to purchase books to use for the workshop sessions and build the teachers' professional libraries
- Compensation for Mentor Coordinator
- Reimbursement of mentor fee for novice teachers that complete the program and are rehired
- Funds for attending out-of-district workshops
- General supplies for program
- Release time for mentor and novice teachers to meet together and classroom visits
- Substitute coverage
- Funding for Literacy and Math Coaches, outside consultants

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Evaluation provides the means for learning and action that result in ongoing individual teacher growth and development. Throughout the year, mentor and novice teachers have been immersed in a reflective process that enables participants to think more deeply about teaching and learning.

The ongoing evaluation process is based upon the following goals:

- Strengthen teacher knowledge and skills related to the NJSL in order to enhance student learning
- Identify best instructional practices to promote an excellence in teaching
- Guide novice and new teachers in the performance of their duties

We will evaluate the success of Quality Induction of Novice and New Teachers Program through the following assessment tools:

- Exit Slips will be reviewed after each session.
- A survey will determine the level of satisfaction from both the mentor and novice teacher
- Formal and informal exit interviews will assess the learning components
- Reflection sheets will review ideas, understandings, and experiences
- Teacher retention rates will be used to assess the effectiveness of the induction plan

The Denville Township School District will utilize the feedback from the program evaluation to adapt, modify, and refine the ongoing support that is provided to our novice teachers so that we may develop an even stronger community of professional learners.